



**VOTE YES ON SJR 31: PREVENTION IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE RESOLUTION**

**RESOLUTION SUMMARY**

- This resolution directs the Governor, the Department of Public Health and Environment, the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, and the Department of Education to consider cost-effective public policies to reduce unintended pregnancy rates in Colorado.
- This resolution reaffirms Colorado's commitment to:
  - Empower women and their families to make responsible, informed decisions about reproductive health care choices in ways that promote healthy lives, children, families, and communities;
  - Respect a woman's right to make personal, private health care decisions in consultation with her doctor, her family and God or conscience and free from government intrusion; and
  - Ensure physicians are not prevented from providing generally accepted standards of medical care.
- This resolution identifies unintended and unwanted pregnancies as a reproductive health care issue that impacts the ability of Colorado women to lead healthy lives and have healthy children, families and communities.
- The resolution demonstrates policymakers' support for developing public policy based on sound, scientific research and analysis of barriers and challenges facing Colorado women and girls in preventing unintended pregnancies.

**BACKGROUND**

- Research indicates more than 27,500 births result from unintended or unwanted pregnancies in Colorado each year.<sup>1</sup>
- An estimated 15,500 women obtained abortions in Colorado in 2000.<sup>2</sup>
- With an estimated 12,130 teenage pregnancies each year, Colorado has the 22nd highest teenage pregnancy rate in the nation<sup>3</sup>
- Unintended or unwanted teen pregnancies cost Colorado taxpayers \$101 million in 2004.<sup>4</sup>
- Only one-third of teen mothers receive a high school diploma nationally, and less than 2% obtain a college degree by age 30.<sup>5</sup>
- Nationally, teen mothers are more likely to end up on welfare (nearly 80 percent of unmarried teen mothers end up on welfare).<sup>6</sup>
- Contraceptive use is a key predictor of women's recourse to abortion: American women who are at risk of experiencing an unintended pregnancy but are not using contraceptives account for almost half of all abortions.<sup>7</sup>
- Understanding barriers to and attitudes about contraceptive use will promote sound, research-based public policy and public awareness strategies to reduce unintended pregnancies in Colorado and the need for abortion.
- *By promoting policies that put prevention first in reproductive health care, Colorado can lead the nation in ensuring women and their families have access to tools and information they need to make informed, responsible decisions about important life issues and empower them to have healthy lives, children and families.*

**SUPPORT EFFORTS TO REDUCE UNINTENDED PREGNANCY AND PROMOTE HEALTHY WOMEN & FAMILIES**

For more information, contact Toni Panetta at (303) 394-1973 ext. 17

<sup>1</sup> "Colorado Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)," Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, accessed at <http://www.cdph.state.co.us/hs/prams/>.

<sup>2</sup> "State Facts about Abortion: Colorado," Guttmacher Institute, accessed at <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/sfaa/pdf/colorado.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> "Contraception Counts: Colorado," Guttmacher Institute, accessed at [http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/state\\_data/states/colorado.html](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/state_data/states/colorado.html).

<sup>4</sup> "By the Numbers: The Public Costs of Teen Childbearing in Colorado," The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, accessed at <http://www.teenpregnancy.org/costs/pdf/COLORADO.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> "General Facts and Stats," The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, accessed at <http://www.teenpregnancy.org/resources/data/genfact.asp>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> "State Facts about Abortion: Colorado."